

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9094

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4877

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC JO US

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN ADMISSION POLICY RE US CITIZEN

REF: STATE 228481

1. EMBASSY HAS ENQUIRED ABOUT SIGAL CASE AT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WITH CONTACTS WITHIN JORDANIAN SECURITY SERVICES. GOJ OFFICIALS CONFIRM THAT SIGAL WAS BROUGHT TO AMMAN FOR QUESTIONING ON THE DAY OF HIS RETURN FROM WEST BANK, DETAINED FOR A NIGHT, HAD HIS VISA CANCELLED, AND DEPORTED THE NEXT DAY. (IT APPEARS THAT JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED WERE GENERAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE (GID) AND PUBLIC SECURITY FORCE (PSF) BUT NOT FOREIGN MINISTRY.) GID STATES THAT ACTIONS TAKEN ON SECURITY GROUNDS, NOT BECAUSE SOME OF SIGAL'S ANCESTORS WERE JEWISH. SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS IN SIGAL'S CASE SAID TO BE FACT THAT HE OBTAINED MULTIPLE ENTRY VISA IN PARIS, WENT TO WEST BANK AND RETURNED (GOJ SECURITY SERVICES SUSPECT ALL EXPATRIATES WHO DO SO), AND SIGAL REVEALED THAT HE HAS A NUMBER OF FRIENDS AND CONTACTS IN ISRAEL. IT ALSO APPEARS THAT SIGAL'S CASE BECAME ENMESHED

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IN BUREAUCRATIC CONFLICT BETWEEN MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

WHICH ASSERTS AUTHORITY OVER BRIDGE CROSSINGS AND MINISTRY OF TOURISM WHICH, AS APPARENTLY HAPPENED IN SIGAL'S CASE, OFTEN ISSUES BRIDGE CROSSING PERMISSION WITHOUT CHECKING WITH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR.

2. BECAUSE OF UNUSUAL TREATMENT OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN BY GOJ DESCRIBED BY SIGAL, CHARGE BELIEVES WE SHOULD RAISE SIGAL CASE WITH PRIME MINISTER BADRAN. MEETING WILL ALSO PROVIDE GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW WITH NEW PRIME MINISTER GOJ VISA POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AS OUTLINED IN 75 AMMAN 5364. WE WILL ALSO ATTEMPT TO HAVE PRIME MINISTER REVIEW POSSIBILITY OF HAVING SIGAL'S VISA RESTORED IF SECURITY CONCERNS TURN OUT TO BE BASED MORE ON OVERZEALOUSNESS OF OFFICIALS WHO WERE INVOLVED THAN ON ANY SOLID SECURITY EVIDENCE AGAINST SIGAL.

3. RE PARA 3 REFTTEL, EMBASSY, AFTER THOROUGH INVESTIGATION, HAS NO RECORD OF ANY EMBOFF BEING AT BRIDGE TO WEST BANK ON 9 AUGUST. ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS, ONLY USG OFFICIALS WHO CROSSED BRIDGE ON AUG 9 WERE MARSHALL BERG, DEPARTMENT OF STATE (CU/NEA DIRECTOR), AND MEMBER OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE MISSION IN JORDAN MAJOR WHITTINGTON AND HIS WIFE AND PARENTS-IN-LAW. WHITTINGTONS DO NOT RECALL HAVING ANY CONVERSATION WITH AMCIT SIMILAR THAT MENTIONED BY SIGAL IN PARA 3 REFTTEL.

4. UNLESS DEPARTMENT ADVISES OTHERWISE, CHARGE PLANS TO RAISE MATTER WITH PRIME MINISTER IN MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21.
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